

REMARKS

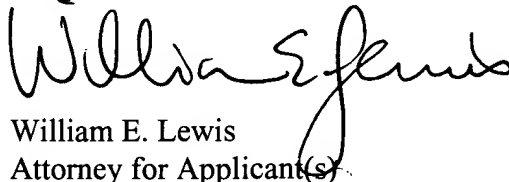
The present application was filed on November 22, 1999 with claims 1-27. After two restriction requirements, claims 1-15 and 25-27 are pending. In the present Office Action, the Examiner: (i) rejected claims 1 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,135,468 to Meissner (hereinafter "Meissner"); (ii) rejected claims 1 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,794,017 to Evans (hereinafter "Evans"); and (iii) acknowledged allowable subject matter in claims 2-15.

In this response, Applicants: (i) cancel all non-elected claims (claims 16-24) and claim 1 without prejudice to pursue such claims in a continuation application; (ii) rewrite claim 2 in independent form; and (iii) amend independent claims 25 and 27 to incorporate limitations of allowable claim 2.

While Applicants believe that the claims of the present application, in their form prior to this amendment, are patentable over Meissner and Evan, Applicants have nonetheless rewritten allowable claim 2 in independent form and amended independent claims 25 and 27 to incorporate limitations of allowable claim 2 in a sincere effort to move this application through to allowance.

Since rejected independent claim 1 has been canceled and independent claims 25 and 27 amended to incorporate limitations of allowable claim 2, and since claims 3-15 directly or indirectly depend from allowable claim 2, it is respectfully asserted that the present application, including claims 2-15, is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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